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ABSTRACT

This teacher training guide provides information about Navajo cultural beliefs that conflict with learning in the dominant society's educational system. The guide offers rationales for the taboos and recommendations for providing appropriate learning situations, materials, and multicultural learning styles. Section 1 contains information on Navajo traditional taboos about snakes, green lizards, frogs, bears, coyotes, owls, lightning, fire at night, grave sites, rainbows, noise at night, baskets, playing ball, winter season rituals, death in the family, looking in the eye, outward affection to relatives, close contact, and advance planning. Section 2 discusses beliefs about questioning, talking, arrowheads, feathers, and Navajo clan and extended family relationships. Section 3 addresses educational problems for Navajo children due to the lifestyle their parents can provide within a contemporary economic crisis. Considered are economic impacts of lack of electricity, and hot running water, inadequate shelter, clothing, and educational materials, and problems of communication and transportation; geographic/weather impacts of road conditions, bussing, isolation, and inclement weather; social problems of limited parental support, or value for education, time concept, and unfamiliarity with curriculum, one-parent families, and poor self-image; impacts of educational rewards, education standards, policies, and curriculum; and health problem impacts of malnutrition, inadequate health clinic services, and limited juvenile counseling services. A final section provides definitions of salient terms used in the guide. (NEC)

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TITLE VII

Central Consolidated Schools District # 22

TITLE VII BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

It is common knowledge in public education that Indian children coming from a minority culture with diverse cultural experiences almost always underachieve in an academic setting with curriculum designed for the dominant society children; a curriculum that is usually implemented by teachers equipped with skills specifically for teaching English speaking students.

Through the Title VII Bilingual Education Program, Central Consolidated School District #22 is making efforts to eliminate or to alleviate some of the obstacles that always stunt Navajo Indian children's academic performance. Through this effort it was determined that one of the basic problems was ignorance of cultural values and conflicts on the part of educators which leads to negative judgements and subtle coercive policies concerning behaviors which follow from these values. Within the content of cultural conflict for most Navajo children attending public schools for formal education, it was determined that educators knowing their students cultural background was important so that they can provide an appropriate learning situation, appropriate learning materials, and appropriate multi-cultural teaching styles. It was further determined that knowing or being aware of some Navajo taboos and beliefs is a way of being aware of why the Navajo children seem to display a different attitude towards schooling; in many cases their attitude seems to be one of pure apathy for schooling.

CULTURAL CONFLICT - School - Community - Curriculum is a teacher training material which provides information on some of the Navajo cultural beliefs that conflict with learning in the dominant society educational system. The first part contains information on *Navajo Traditional taboos* which primarily involves superstitious belief. The second part deals with other beliefs which teach respect for cultural practices rather than scare tactics as in the case of taboos. The third part points out some of the educational problems for Navajo children due to the lifestyle their parents can provide within a contemporary economic crisis.

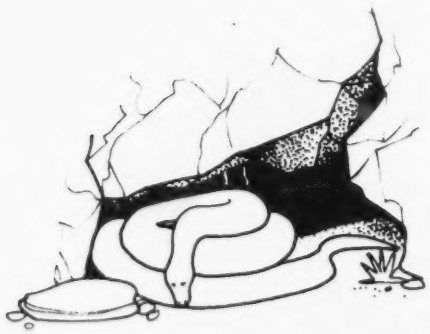
It is our sincere hope that the materials will provide useful information on Navajo culture relative to teaching Navajo children. It is also envisioned that this information will help teachers of Navajo children to develop appropriate curriculum and teaching methodologies for the Navajo children.

A. THE SNAKE

Taboo. Do not touch any part of snakes. Do not look at mating snakes. Do not burn snakes and do not inhale the odor of snakes or of their dens.

Rationale: The belief is that any contamination caused by contact with snakes, physically, by sight or through the sense of smell will cause dermatosis problems (skin rashes and sores).

Recommendation: Take a survey of your class to find out which of your students do have a strong belief in this taboo. In most cases taking a class to a zoo is permissable as long as each student has a choice to look at or not to look at snakes. But it would be very unwise to keep a snake in a classroom as a pet and definitely a live snake should never be used in a class project.



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B THE GREEN LIZARD

Taboo: Do not bother green lizards and do not make them angry.

Rationale: The belief is that if you get the lizard mad at you, it will chase you and jump on top of your head and urinate poison on you. The poison will kill you instantly.

Recommendation: It is permissable to talk about lizards in the classroom and there are no problems with zoo excursion. Do not use lizards for classroom pets, nor as a class project. This belief is becoming part of the static culture (nearly extinct).

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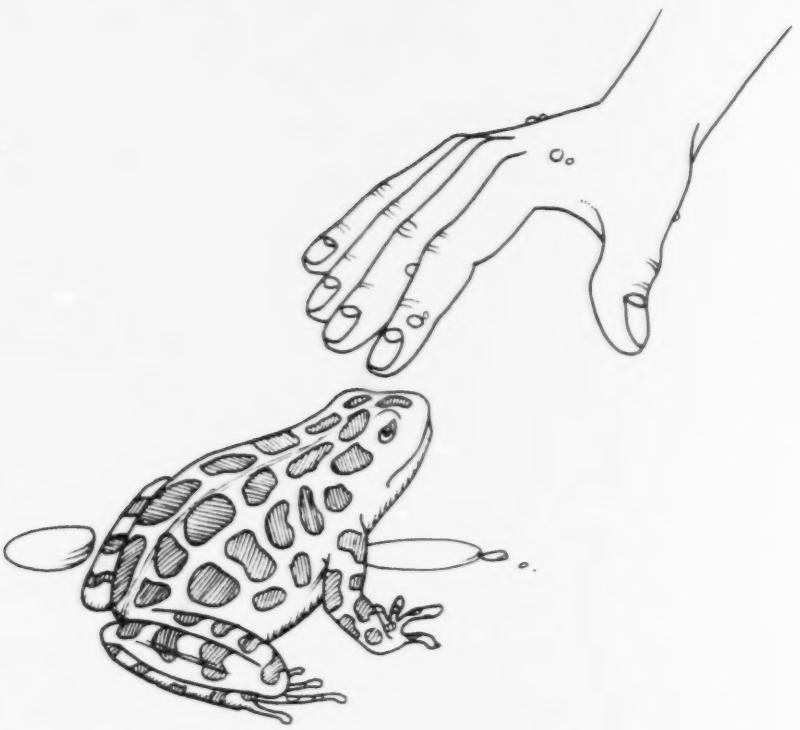
C. THE FROG



Taboo: Do not touch or handle a frog.

Rationale: The belief is that handling a frog will cause warts on your hands and it will cripple your pelvis and joints in your legs. You will be hopping around like a frog.

Recommendation: Avoid using frogs in your classroom. This belief is becoming part of the static culture (nearly extinct). The frog belief is not as strong as snake and lizard taboos.

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D. THE BEAR

Taboo: Never touch a bear, its waste material, its footprints, its bedding or anything it has touched. When you are in the mountains, do not be too direct in talking about it or talking to it. Do not call it by its name, "shash", but call it "my grandson" and tell it to go into a dense forest and live there where no other living entities set foot.

Rationale: The belief is that more than a hundred years ago the bears were a sacred part of the Navajo religious rituals. The bear was considered to have strong psychological power and could hypnotize human beings, especially children. The bears were considered capable of kidnapping and converting a young child into their way of life. In some cases, the Navajos were able to rescue the kidnapped child but were unable to bring the child back into the Navajo world psychologically. If the child was rescued and brought back into the Navajo home, the child would not be able to speak and he/she would die of loneliness. It was believed that through its power the bear could distort the psychological state of an adult Navajo.

Recommendation: This belief is becoming part of the static culture (nearly extinct) but there are still many parents and grandparents with this belief. There seems to be no problem in discussing bears in the classrooms and no problems with visitations to the zoo. However, be very cautious of using a real part of a bear. Example: hides, nails, teeth, etc.

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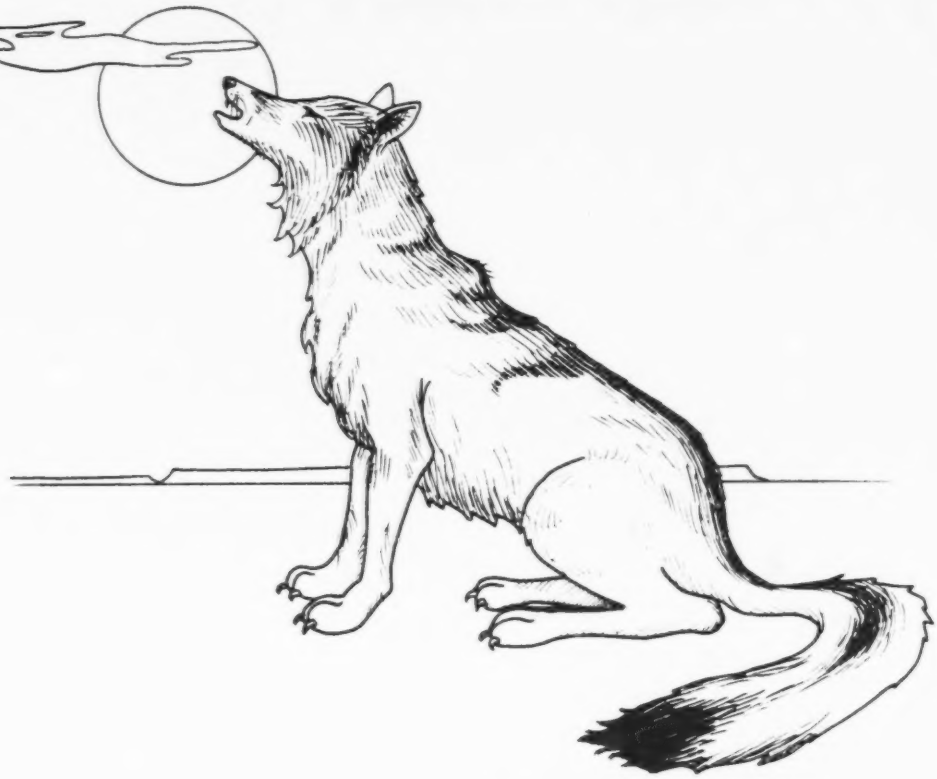
E. THE COYOTE



Taboo: Avoid having a coyote crossing your path ahead of you in the east direction. Also avoid having a coyote howling at you or near you where you can see the coyote facing toward you while it's howling.

Rationale: There's a disagreement on the reason for this belief. One belief is that the coyote represents a bad spirit that can only bring evil things on you or on your family. The second belief is that the coyote only foretells an unfortunate event or thing in your path or in the near future. So to deal with this belief, a Navajo tries not to let the coyote cross his path in the east direction. If the coyote does cross his path in the east direction, the Navajo can either use corn pollen and pray on the coyote footprints and go on ahead across the coyote's path or he can turn around and go home and never cross the coyote's path until the next day. The Navajo can also go ahead and cross the coyote's path without praying and take a chance on bad luck up ahead. In this case, whether bad luck occurs or not, when the Navajo gets home he gets a medicine man to pray for him and this costs more.

NOTE: If the coyote crosses the Navajo's path in any other direction than East, it is foretelling good luck. In this case, the Navajo prays with joy for the forthcoming good luck.

Recommendation: Although this belief is still strong with most Navajos, there seems to be no problem in talking about coyotes in class and no problem with field trips to the zoo. Avoid using real parts of a coyote or in taxidermic form in the classroom.

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F. THE OWL

Taboo: Avoid having a night owl near or hooting near you day or night.

Rationale: An owl is considered to represent a bad spirit, or it represents the spirit of a dead person through reincarnation. Many years back, the traditional Navajos did not believe in life after death and therefore they avoided any association with dead bodies. Many Navajos still believe in ghosts associated with a dead person or a dead body. Also in the past the Navajos believed that the ghosts of dead people roamed at night. Therefore some of the night animals were associated with ghostly spirits. For example, the owl hoots and the coyote howls at night and that is the reason why Navajos believed that they represent the spirit of dead people. Sometimes when dogs howl or chickens croak in the middle of the night, it is considered bad or a foretelling of death.

Recommendation: Do not use an owl as a pet or in a class project in the classroom. Avoid using a photograph of an owl as a decoration in your classroom.

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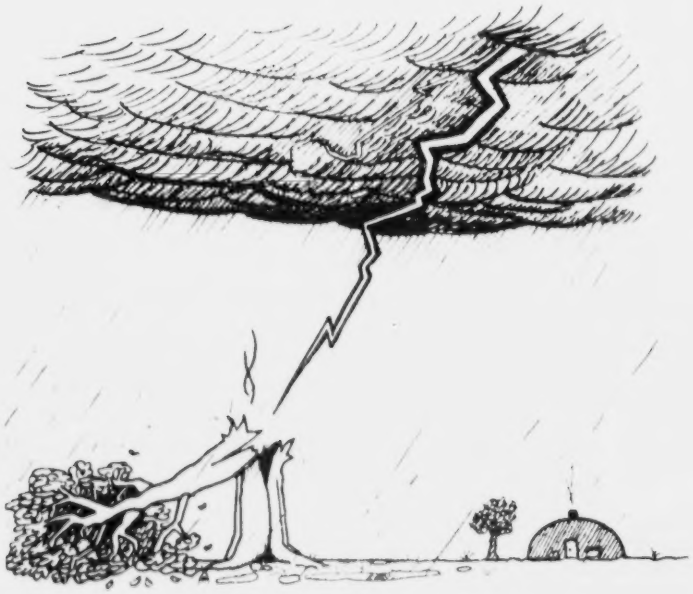
G. THE THUNDER AND LIGHTNING



Taboo: Avoid contamination with lightning-struck trees, animals, etc. Avoid talking bad about lightning striking a person or animal or any personal belongings.

Rationale: The belief is that direct contact with lightning-struck objects or direct contact with smoke from lightning or a direct contact with the lights from nearby lightning will cause internal cancers and arthritis. It will also cause gastric problems or excessive acid in the stomach. Also if you curse at the lightning, it will strike you or someone or something close to you.

Although part of the belief is now part of the static culture (nearly extinct), still the belief is that if you talk about safety you are to avoid talking about the possibility of lightning striking a person, because if you do, you would in a sense be placing a curse on that person.

Recommendation: No problems in teaching safety or science lesson that includes lightning and thunder or electrical storms.

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H. FIRE AT NIGHT

Taboo: Avoid gazing into the night at a far distance.

Rationale: The belief is that you may see the spirit of a dead person's bonfire which causes emotional problems such as loneliness, bad memories, etc., which eventually leads to physical sickness.

Recommendation: Most classroom teachers should not encounter this problem with their students. Perhaps teachers can provide information to demonstrate that in most cases there is a scientific explanation for any lights at night and that it should not bother them.

NOTE: There are other phenomenon still unexplainable (UFO's etc.?).

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I. THE GRAVE SITE

Taboo: Only pallbearers should attend a funeral. Do not go near the grave site at any time. Do not look at the grave site, especially at night.

Rationale: By going to a funeral you can contaminate yourself with the spirit of the dead person and it will haunt you. If you go near a grave site you intrude on the spirit of the dead person and it haunts you. If you look at the grave site you may see or hear the dead person which will cause you emotional and psychological disturbance.

Recommendation: Do not take students to the grave yard or cemetery.

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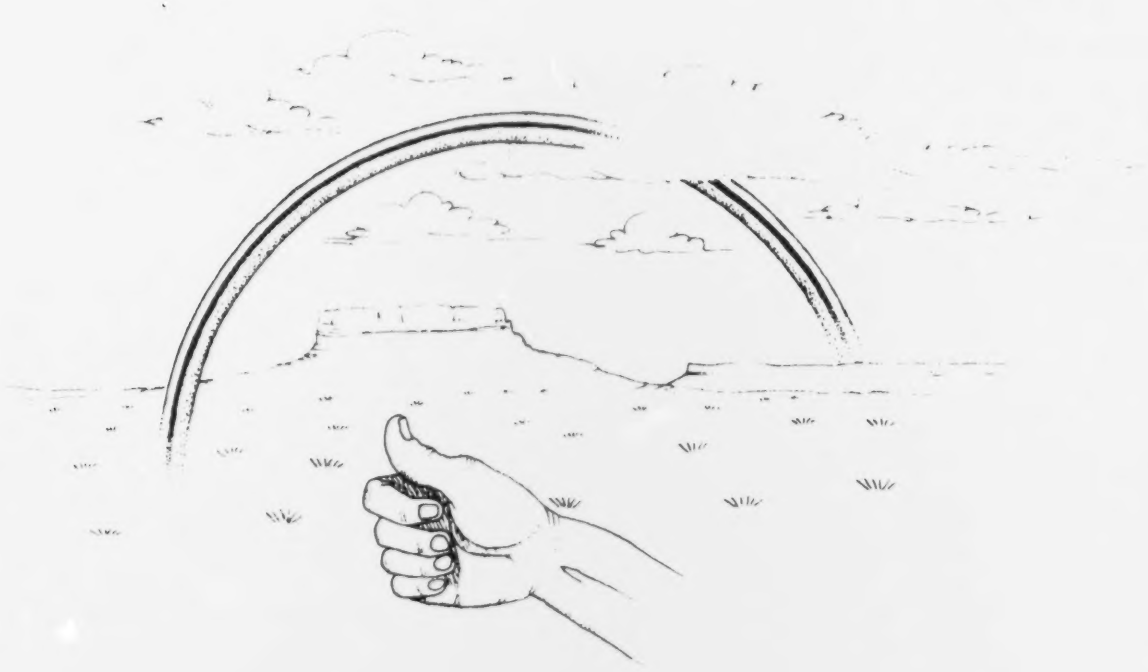
J. POINTING AT RAINBOW



Taboo: Never point at a rainbow with your pointer finger.

Rationale: If you point at a rainbow with your pointer, it will become deformed and crooked.

Recommendation: Your thumb is the recommended finger with which to point.

NOTE: This belief was so vague that there are no other meaningful explanations.

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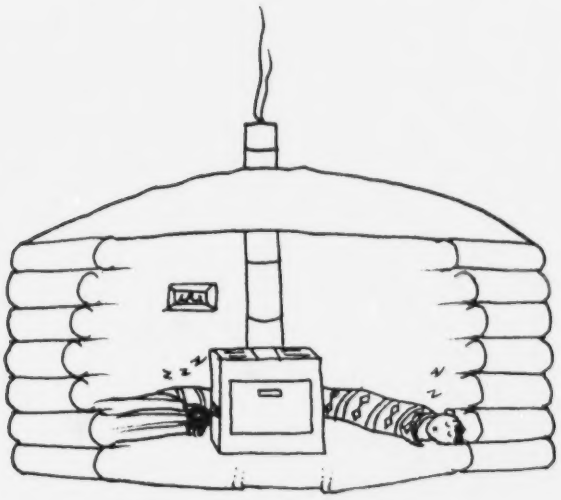
K. NOISE AT NIGHT



Taboo: Do not make noise at night after dusk.

Rationale: The belief is that the blind spirits of sickness of all types are wandering around in the night. If you stay up late and make noise, you will attract them and they will come into your system and make you sick.

Recommendation: Teach your students the importance of getting a good night's rest on a regular basis to maintain good health.

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L. THE BASKET

Taboo: Do not place an upside down woven basket or even a dish on top of a child's head.

Rationale: Anything placed in a Navajo wedding basket when in the upright position will grow, expand, and multiply, similar to the basket of plenty. But when the basket is turned upside down it represents enclosure which limits growth. Therefore, if you placed an upside down basket on a child's head it will enclose and limit his total entity, i.e. his physical growth, his psychological development, his intellectual development, his ability to gain materially.

Recommendation: Health lessons on physical and mental growth and development will help eliminate cultural conflict in this area.

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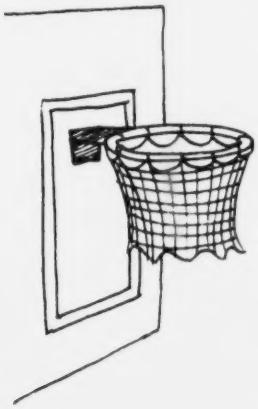
M. **PLAYING BALL**



Taboo: Girls should not play with basketballs, footballs, volleyballs, etc.

Rationale: The belief is that if girls play with balls, their bust (breasts) will grow excessively large.

Recommendation: Teach P.E. and Health with more emphasis on the importance of physical coordination, proper health care, sportsmanship, team work, and competitive development. This will help eliminate this type of cultural conflict.

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N. WINTER SEASON RITUALS

Taboo: Yeibiichei dances, Fire dances, and the Shoe games are to be conducted only during the winter months (after the first frost in late Fall to the first sound of thunder in the early Spring).

Rationale: The belief is that singing songs and performing dances of these rituals during the non-winter months (Spring, Summer and Fall) will upset the thunder and lightning and the spirits of the four seasons. This will cause severe weather (drought, snowstorms, floods, windstorms, etc.) and cause hardship on human beings.

This will also upset the winter-hibernating animals such as the reptiles, bears, etc. These animals will attempt to take over the human home environment and attack other animals they normally wouldn't bother.

The Navajos believe in harmony with the four seasons and the rest of the natural environment.

Recommendation: Find out from the parents or from other local resources the appropriate Navajo cultural practices throughout the four seasons.

Also teach proper utilization of natural resources and maintenance of environmental balance.

NOTE: When the natural environmental cycle is altered or distorted to cause imbalance there will be other negative side effects. This is a proven fact with air pollution, water pollution, disruption of the water cycle and animal habitat becoming a reality.

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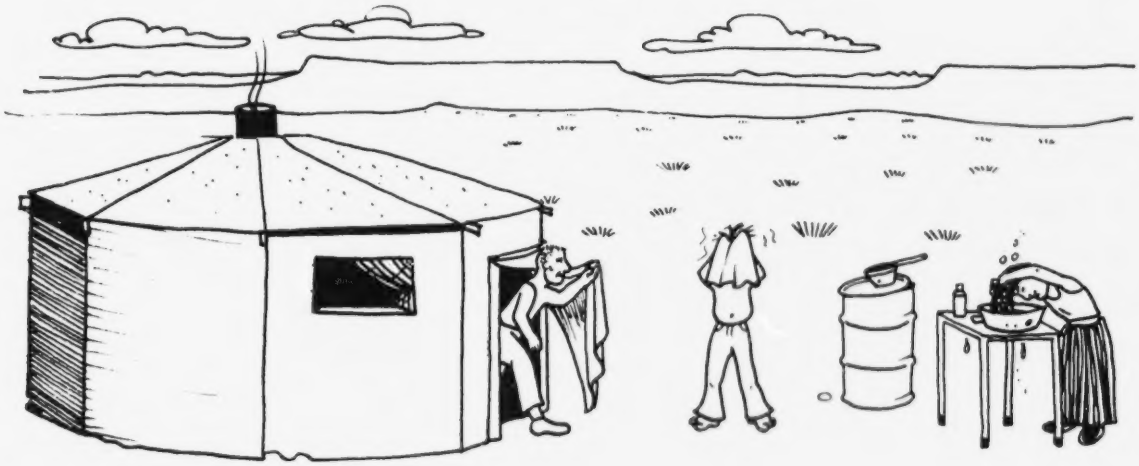
O. DEATH IN THE FAMILY



Taboo: When a family member or a member of an extended family dies, all the relatives must be restricted to their homes for four (4) days.

Rationale: The original Navajo belief is that there is no life after death. When a person dies, his family members are to completely disassociate themselves with her/his personal material property, names, memories and are never to visit the grave site.

The belief is that within the four days after a person dies his/her spirit is still wandering among the living family, and the Navajo do not want to mix the spirit of a dead person with the spirit of living persons so the family members must stay home and even watch their language so as not to use terminology concerning death during the four days. The community sanctions this belief because they themselves do not want to contaminate themselves with the spirit of a dead person. At dawn on the fourth day after burial, the family washes themselves and pray together with corn pollen and white corn for a good lasting life for themselves.

Recommendation: Show respect for the surviving children and approve the four days leave or absence relative to this cultural observation.

Use plants and animals as the subject and teach the life cycle (birth, growth, living and death) to help children understand life and death.

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P. LOOKING IN THE EYE

Taboo: Do not stare or look at people too much and too long.

Rationale: The belief is that:
It is impolite to stare at people.
It is disrespectful to stare at elder people.
It is dangerous to look into the eyes of other people, especially elder people, because they may hypnotize you and hurt you through witchcraft.

Recommendation: Teach students that it is not impolite nor disrespectful to look at the person you're talking to or who is talking to you. Explain that it is accepted practice in the American dominant society. Teachers must promote positive self-image development for students whether it be in Navajo or in the dominant culture.

NOTE: Many children are not taught with this belief but they will put their head down or not look at you because their parents or friends do.

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Q. OUTWARD AFFECTION TO RELATIVES

Taboo: Do not touch your relatives in an affectionate manner beyond a hand shake.

Rationale: The belief is that if you touch your relative such as putting your arms around them or kissing and hugging them, it will make you sexually go crazy and lose your sanity and jump in the fire to burn yourself.

Recommendation: As a result of this belief, some children do not want to be shown excessive affection by touching or even with verbal expressions. Some children do not mind being cuddled. Use your own judgement but understand that the child is not being disrespectful or prejudiced towards you by this attitude of unwilliness to accept affection or a strong compliment.

NOTE: This belief was one of the devices used to control and promote the Navajo Clan system to maintain proper intermarriage for young people.

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R. CLOSE CONTACT

Belief: Do not situate yourself too close to strangers, especially in a crowded area.

Rationale: The belief is that when you're young and good looking or if you have nice material things such as good turquoise jewelry or if you hold high social status in the community, people will tend to be jealous and envy you and some will go as far as hurting you because of your good fortune. Because of these possible resentments from unfortunate individuals, you must not get too close to people, otherwise they may spill a poison powder in your face to hurt you or they may pull out some of your hair and bewitch you by placing your hair in a grave site or in some undesirable place.

NOTE: It seems the Navajos were a very distrustful group of people. They also believed in living a long life (into serenity). Any interference with this belief was strongly guarded and sometimes it went as far as becoming nearly a phobia.

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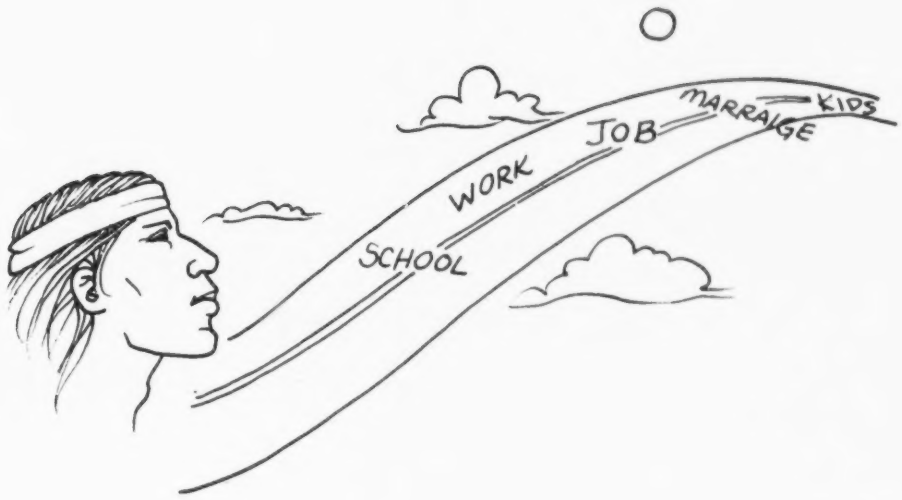
S. ADVANCE PLANNING



Taboo: Avoid making plans for your life too far in advance.

Rationale: The belief is that a Navajo person should live a long life. Therefore he/she should not limit his potential to a very specific plan with a timeline. If he/she sets a specific advance plan for future actions he/she limits all other possibilities for living a good long life.

NOTE: It seems that the Navajo Traditionalists were and are a death-fearing group of people. Also they did not believe in life after death as a Christian person would. For these reasons they avoided any connotation or suggestion of death relative to their livelihood.

So the belief was that if one makes specific advance planning concerning his life, he in a sense limits his destiny, the word limit in this sense connotes termination of continuity of any living entity. The word termination connotes death relative to Navajo life within this belief. So advance planning was avoided, and yet it is one of the most important elements for a successful life in the dominant society and thereby a cultural conflict exists for a Navajo with this belief.

Recommendation: Teach the students that advance planning and organization helps a person to be more successful in living and participating in the dominant society.

Teach the students to be skillful in the development of advance planning, prediction and projection for future actions.

Teach the students to be more time-oriented in carrying out their daily activities.

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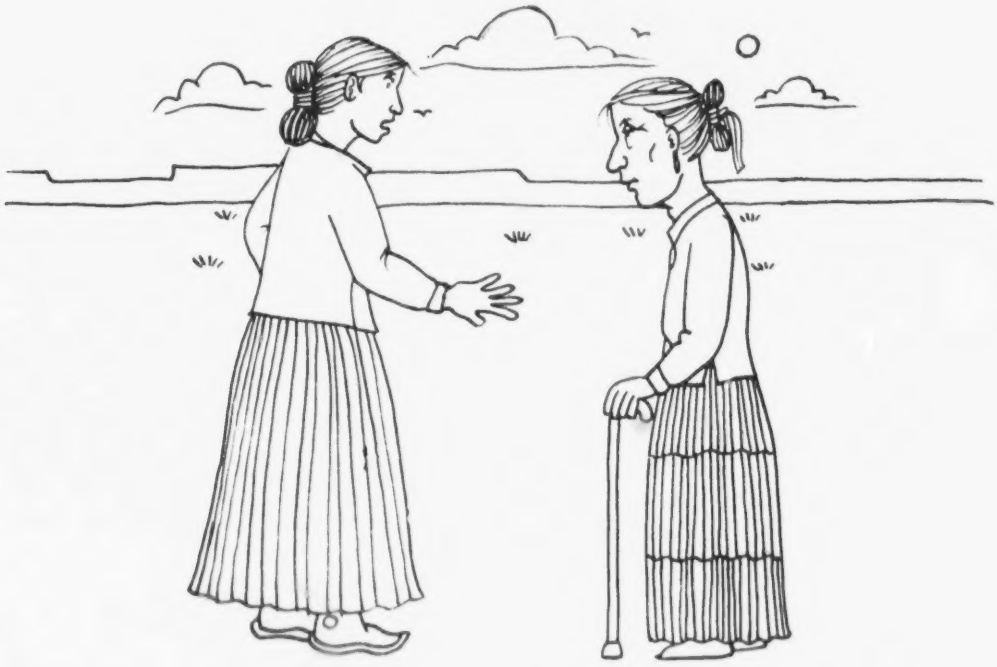
A. QUESTIONING



Belief: Young inexperienced persons should not ask too many questions, especially of elder people.

Rationale: The belief is that it is disrespectful for a young person to try to take a short cut to obtain wisdom and knowledge from an elder person when it took the elder person a lifetime to gain his knowledge.

It is best for a young person to gain knowledge gradually through actual experiences. This type of learning avoids too many irrational decisions.

Also the belief is that young people mature through different stages. As they mature they are ready for various information and skills for survival. Therefore the youths do not need to ask too many questions because the elder folks will know when to supply appropriate information.

NOTE: It seems that this belief was a good method to avoid explaining scientific phenomena and also a method of control on young people's behavior.

Recommendation: Teach the students that they can have respect for the elder folks' opinions and knowledge while at the same time they can develop inquiring minds to become permanent learners through questioning.

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B. TALKING

Belief: Young people should not talk too much.

Rationale: The belief is that the young and inexperienced should not talk too much in the presence of the elder people or the young, inexperienced person should not challenge the elder people verbally, because talking too much, too fast, and too soon can cause one to make mistakes too often. Also a young, inexperienced person can get hurt emotionally and psychologically by too many mistakes and failures. This can happen by talking too much, too fast, too soon.

NOTE: It seems that the traditional Navajo education was done by more observation and actual experience which required much of a person's lifetime to gain a small amount of knowledge. There was less direct instruction, less verbalization and less fast transmission of information.
It seems also this type (traditional Navajo education) of educational instruction method was used as a method of discipline to control young people, not to challenge or rebel against elder folks' knowledge and authority.

Recommendation: Provide more language experiences of all types with encouragement for the students to talk more, at the same time respecting elder folks' opinions, whether it be in the Navajo or dominant culture.

NOTE: It seems in most cases that Navajo children do not respond much in English in the classroom. This is not totally due to Navajo traditional beliefs but this is because they do not have enough English language experience and therefore lack English proficiency skills to carry on a functional conversation in the English language.

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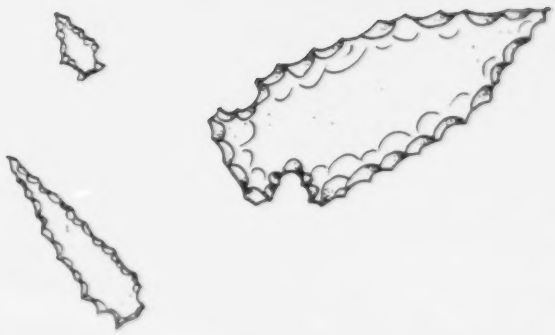
C. ARROWHEAD



Belief: The belief is that the arrowhead is a sacred cultural item that is to be used in a ceremonial ritual to rid evil spirits and to use it as a shield for protection from any evil spirits.

Recommendation: Avoid using the actual arrowhead as a toy or for exhibition items.

Pictures and imitations of the arrowhead are permissable for use in the classroom.

NOTE: There are Tribal and Federal Laws on excavating and removing certain Indian artifacts and this includes authentic arrowheads.

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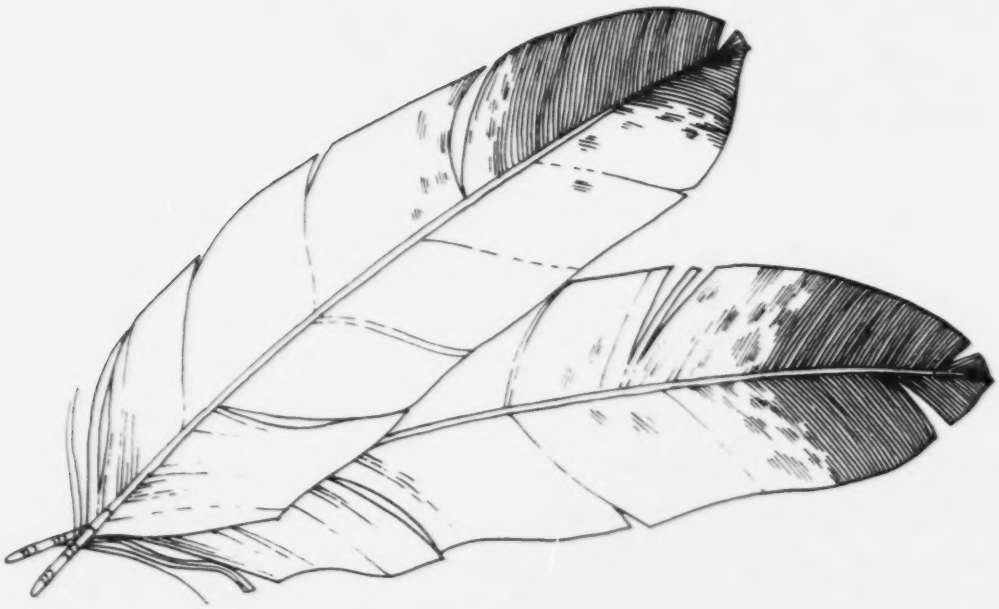
D. FEATHERS



Belief: An eagle feather is sacred religious paraphenalia whereas an owl feather is forbidden to be used in any way.

Rationale: The belief is that an eagle feather can be used as a medium to communicate with the supernatural power or the great spirit. If properly used, it can shed bad spirits off a person and restore good harmony with nature and the supernatural world. The Indians consider an eagle feather to be a symbol similar to the United States flag. In the traditional Indian world, the eagle feather is highly prized and treated with much more respect than the U.S. flag.

Children and females do not handle eagle feathers unless they are given to them through ceremonials.

Recommendation: Treat eagle feathers with respect. It should not be used as a toy or for mere exhibits. Never use an owl feather with Navajo children.

NOTE: U.S. Federal laws prohibit possession of eagle feathers without a proper permit. It is also unlawful to sell eagle feathers.

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E. NAVAJO CLAN AND EXTENDED FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Belief: The maternal aunt is considered and addressed as mother along with the natural (biological) mother.

The maternal cousins are considered and addressed as brothers and sisters as well as the immediate family of related brothers and sisters.

The Navajo Clan system provides identification for groups of people, families and individuals.

The Navajos are not supposed to marry someone who belongs to the same clan as their natural mother.

NOTE: It seems that one of the purposes of the Navajo Clan system was to prohibit intermarriage within close bloodlines in the family but today there are many clan intermarriages. This creates a situation where almost every Navajo is related as mother, father, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, grandfathers, grandmothers, grandsons, and granddaughters.

Recommendation: Don't get confused when your students sound like they have several mothers, grandmothers, etc. If you have to, find out from a local source as to who are the real immediate family members (blood related) for your students.

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A. ECONOMIC IMPACT (because of poverty and because of a different cultural background, most Navajo parents can not provide a conducive environment for learning in the dominant society fashion):

1. *Electricity:*
Lack of electrically powered utilities at home can interfere with reading, homework assignments and motivation.

Reading with inadequate lighting

Reading under good lighting

2. *Hot Running Water:*
Lack of hot running water can be very discouraging for a student trying to get ready for school every morning, and it can definitely interfere with student motivation to fully participate in learning.

Wash with cold water and not too motivated for school.

Cleaned, refreshed and motivated for going to school.

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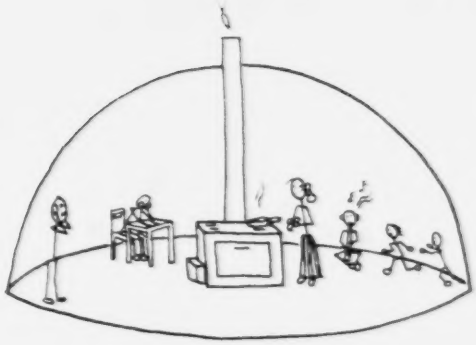
ECONOMIC IMPACT

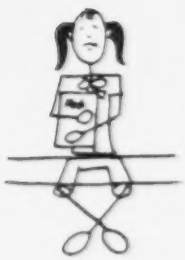
3. *Inadequate Shelter:*
   Lack of warmth and adequate space (rooms) at home can really interfere with studying at home.



Limited and non-private space for individual study

Plenty of rooms for individual study and other activities.

4. *Clothing:*
   Only one set of clothing for the whole semester or for the whole school year really interferes with a student's full participation in learning. This is due to peer group approval and pressures. If you're not adequately clothed, you can not fully become a member of the "in group" or you can not fully participate in various school activities.



One set of clothing for all occasions and school activities.

Clothing for different occasions and for different school activities.

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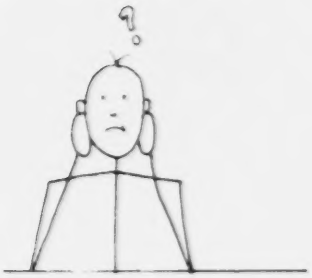
ECONOMIC IMPACT

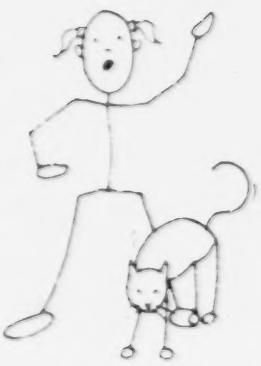
5. *Educational Materials:*
Limited or lack of language learning materials and equipment limits or retards child's language development as well as other academic development.



Inadequate availability of educational materials.

Adequate educational materials in a home.

6. *Communication:*
Lack of modern communication does limit children's learning.



Inadequate environment for communication.

Adequate materials for access to information and language development.

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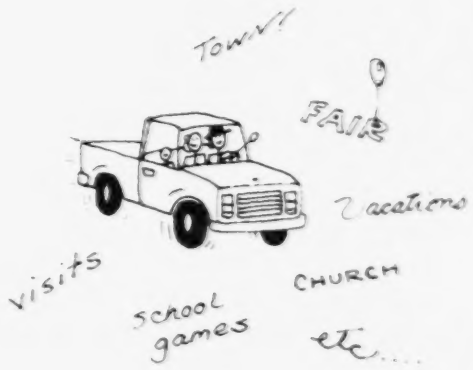
ECONOMIC IMPACT

7. *Transportation:*
Lack of family transportation can interfere with children's learning and full participation in school activities.

Family has to try to catch a ride for traveling.



Family transportation for access to various learning experiences.

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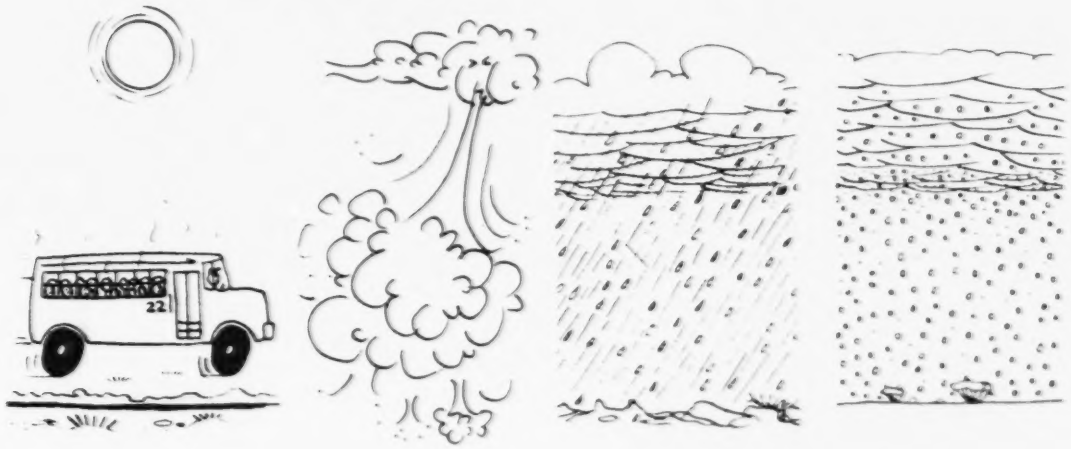
B. GEOGRAPHIC AND WEATHER IMPACT

1. *Road Conditions:*
Poor country road conditions can place a definite burden on the children's energy for learning.

Traveling through unimproved roads under different weather conditions.

2. *Bussing Hardship:*
A long distance traveling through cold weather can interfere with children's learning and motivation for learning.



Traveling in a overcrowded bus through all types of harsh weather for 180 days.

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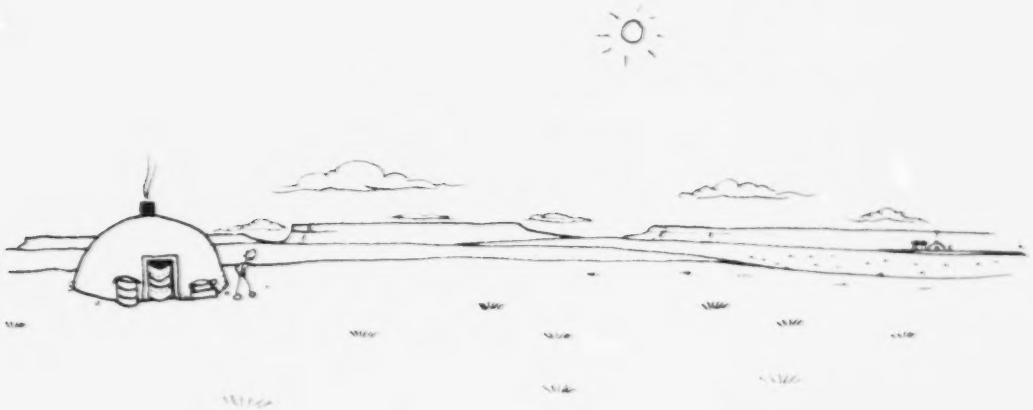
GEOGRAPHIC IMPACT

3. *Isolation Factor:*
Living in an isolated rural area can limit child's interaction with peer group, thereby limiting reinforcement for learning or limiting full utilization of what is learned in the classrooms.



Your close neighbor lives an hour round trip away.

4. *Inclimate Weather:*
Rain, snow, windstorms, etc. can place an extra hardship on children's energy for learning and motivation.

Fight all types of harsh weather to get to school for 180 days.

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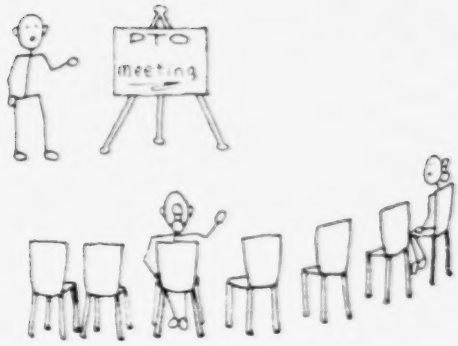
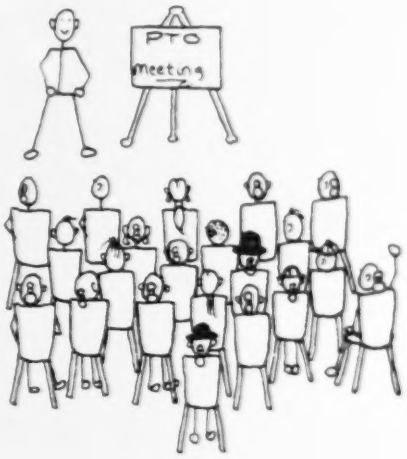
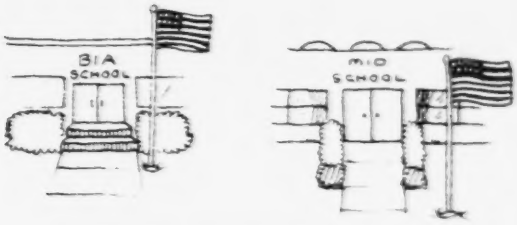
C. SOCIAL PROBLEM IMPACT

1. *Limited Parental Support:*
   Lack of parental involvement and support can reduce effective planning to meet the needs of the individual child.





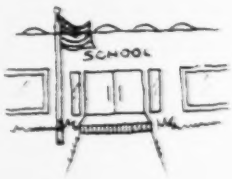
2. *Value For Education:*
   Value difference for education and it benefits directly affects children's interest in going to school daily.



You have to go to either the Washingdoon school or the white children's school.

I don't want to go to somebody's school.

School is not considered belonging to the child or the community.



There is your school, son.

OH BOY! I can't wait to go to school!

School is considered belonging to the community and a child has full rights for service from it.

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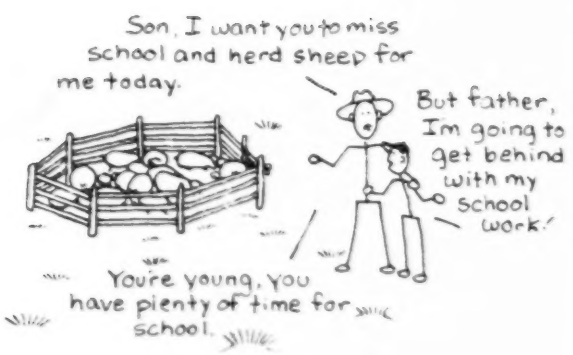
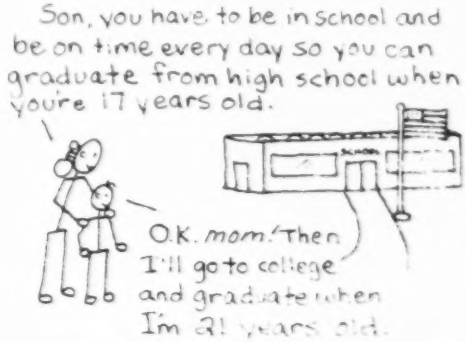
SOCIAL PROBLEM IMPACT

3. *Time Concept:*
Lack of time and schedule orientation can interfere with daily school attendance and academic work completion.

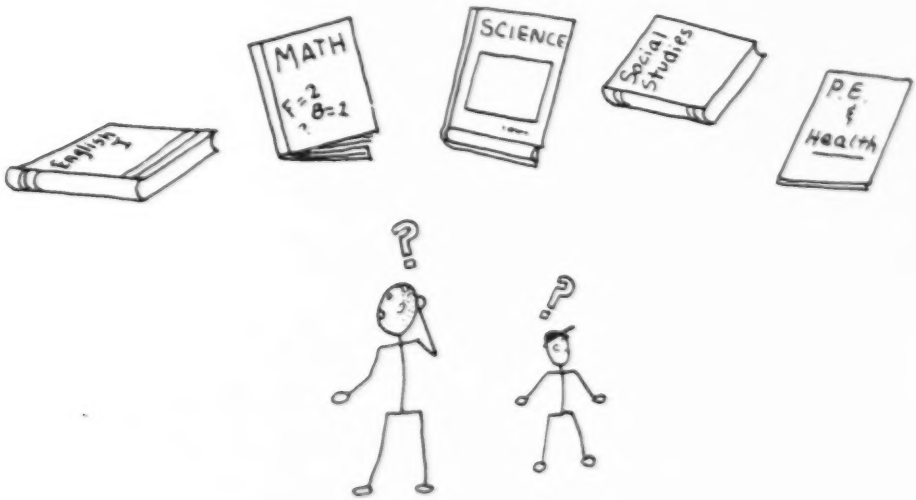

Son, I want you to miss school and herd sheep for me today.
But father, Im going to get behind with my school work!
You're young, you have plenty of time for school.

Lack of Time Orientation


Son, you have to be in school and be on time every day so you can graduate from high school when you're 17 years old.
O.K. mom! Then I'll go to college and graduate when I'm 21 years old.

Proper Time Orientation

4. *Unfamiliarities with Curriculum:*



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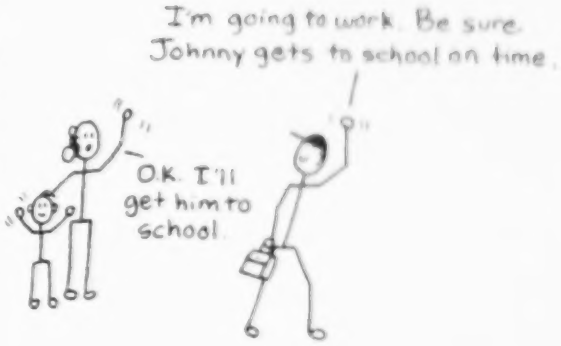
SOCIAL PROBLEM IMPACT

5. *One Parent Family:*
On the Navajo Reservation there are more one-parent (female) families with several children to support. This places an extra burden on the school children to assume much of home chore responsibilities and to look after themselves and their younger siblings which leaves less time, energy and interest for academic work.

One Parent Family



Two Parent Family

6. *Poor Self-Image:*
Lack of positive self-image on the part of the parents and children can hinder full participation in school work.

I don't think you're good enough to compete with those children. You may hurt yourself.
I guess so dad, the Yazzie family has never done anything like those students are doing anyway.

Poor Self-Image

When I was your age, I used to be a super top student. You can be a super-SUPER kid in school, son.
I can feel it in my blood, dad! I am the greatest!!

Positive Self-Image

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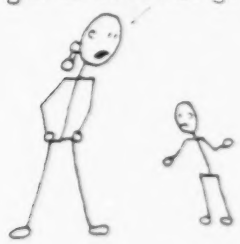
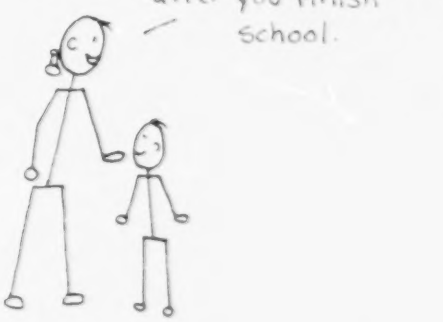
D. EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM IMPACT

1. *Educational Rewards:*
Due to value differentiation, a Navajo family in most cases can not conceive of the rewards received in the future by going to school. In most cases, a Navajo family readily understands an immediate tangible reward for their time and efforts in carrying out their daily activities. This makes school a lesser priority.



Value with lack of understanding for future benefits from schooling.



Value with understanding of future benefits from schooling.

2. *Educational Standards, Policies and Curriculum:*
In most cases a school district where Indian children attend school usually utilizes standards and policies designed for the dominant middle class society children and a curriculum that is not relevant for Indian children. This causes the Indian children to underachieve in school.

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E. HEALTH PROBLEMS IMPACT

1. *Malnutrition:*
In most cases the diet of a Navajo family does not include well-balanced nutritional meals. This causes fatigue and other illness that interfere with Indian children's academic performance.

2. *Inadequate Health Clinic Services:*
Due to the geographic isolation of most Indian residents, it is difficult to have immediate access to health clinic services. For this reason in many cases Indian children unnecessary prolong a simple illness due to a communicable disease which then turns into a complicated health problem.

3. *Limited Juvenile Counseling Services:*
Juvenile counseling services are not readily available for young people in most Indian communities. The Indian family deals with youth counseling as best as they can. In many cases young people attempt to resolve their personal problems haphazardly by themselves.

TERMINOLOGY — DEFINITIONS

Contemporary Navajo Culture Conflict	- current physical and mental struggle of Navajos resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drive, wishes, or external or internal demands from two cultures (Anglo & Navajo), mostly in the economic arena.
Culture	- the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thought, speech, action, and artifacts and depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.
Culture Conflict	- competitive or opposing behavioral action of two incompatible divergent ideas, interests, or persons.
Custom	- a long established practice considered as unwritten law and common to many or to a particular place or class or habitual with an individual.
Great Spirit	- a supernatural power in the universe that created all entities including the celestial system. In most cases that sun is believed to represent this supernatural power. In the Navajo prayers the word Great Spirit and Shitaa' means my father or our father. This connotates the word God in the English language.
Navajo Clan	- an identification system for individuals and groups within the Navajo value system, somewhat similar to nationalities in the dominant society.
Navajo Traditionalism	- Navajos with beliefs congruent with and who practice the old Navajo traditions.
Other Navajo Beliefs	- Navajo customs used as a social control mechanism for social behaviors and a disciplinary device for young Navajos without resorting to scare tactics.
Tradition	- the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction.
Traditional Navajo Taboo	- an old Navajo Indian belief to be forbidden to touch, say, or do something for fear of immediate harm from supposedly dangerous supernatural powers.
Static Culture	- a belief or practice that is not growing and not in use but still exists.